

Joseph Howze Is Dead at 95; Groundbreaking African- American Bishop

By Daniel E. Slotnik

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Joseph Howze, the first African-American bishop appointed to preside over a Roman Catholic diocese in the 20th century and an advocate for blacks within the church, died on Jan. 9 in Ocean Springs, Miss. He was 95.

His death was confirmed by Terrance Dickson, a spokesman for the Diocese of Biloxi, Miss., which Bishop Howze led from 1977 to 2001.

Before Bishop Howze, the only bishop known to be of African-American descent to lead an American diocese was James Augustine Healy, who became bishop of Portland, Me., in 1875.

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